



**Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group Meeting**  
**<http://alexandriava.gov/ParkingStudies#OldTownStudy>**  
**July 31, 2012**

**Work Group Attendees**

John Gosling  
Rob Kaufman  
Heidi Ford  
John Hassett  
Mark Feldheim

Nate Macek  
Paul Hurtle  
Peter Pennington  
Merrie Morris  
Jody Manor

**Absent**  
**Bert Ely**  
**Charlotte Hall**  
**Marsha Wright**  
**Andrew Blair**

**Aimee Houghton**  
**Charlie Banta**  
**Mark Abramson**

**City Staff Attendees**

Abi Lerner  
Barbara Ross  
Faye Dastgheib

Karen Callaham  
Nancy Williams

**Citizen Count**

4

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by Abi Lerner.

**Purpose of Meeting**

Abi reported that the agenda for the meeting would involve the City's Residential Parking Permit Program (RPPP) as well as recommendations to address existing issues. Faye Dastgheib stated that the first part of the meeting will discuss district by district parking issues based on findings of the sample block survey conducted and the second part of the meeting will focus on district by district potential strategies and pros and cons of each recommendation.

**Issues and Factors for Consideration**

Faye stated that there are two main issues that we are addressing:

1. During certain times of the day there is not adequate parking for residents
2. Commuters and visitors park on residential streets.

It was also noted that while strategizing possible options, the Work Group should consider the need for a healthy balance of both visitor and residential parking, and that any changes to the RPPP should maintain adequate parking to support businesses. The concept of practical capacity which is the level of utilization ( 85%) at which potential parkers perceive a parking facility or block face as full was discussed as well as residents' concerns regarding possible impact of Waterfront development on on-street parking in Districts 1 and 2.

**Findings by District**

***District 1*** – survey findings in District 1 indicated that parking approaches its practical capacity at certain hours of the day (5-7 PM). Overall, on weekdays and Saturdays from 5-7 PM and from 10 PM-12 AM, 60-75% of parked vehicles have District 1 RPP stickers.

**Districts 2 and 5** -Findings from the occupancy survey in Districts 2 and 5 are grouped together as they had similar parking occupancy patterns during the course of the day. There is a healthy balance between vehicles with District 2 RPP stickers and those that are from other districts or outside of Alexandria. In addition, at least 25% of parking spaces are available during the 5-7 PM peak occupancy hour.

**District 3** - District 3 had the same parking occupancy pattern as Districts 2 and 5, in the afternoon and evening with a significant number of available spaces. However, parking in District 3 reached its practical capacity on Fridays between 11 AM- 1 PM.

**District 4** - District 4 had a different occupancy pattern during the survey times. Practical capacity was reached during the peak afternoon hours of 5-7 PM. On weekdays between 40% and 60% of parked vehicles were from outside of the city and only 6% of parking spaces were available. Similarly, on Saturday during the same time, only 4% of parking spaces were available and 40-60% of the parked cars came from outside of Alexandria.

### **Potential Strategies**

1. ***Decrease allowable parking duration on residential blocks within acceptable walking distance of King Street to one hour for non-permit holders.*** This would increase turnover and chances of finding an available space, reduce cruising time for drivers looking for a parking space, and encourage long term parkers to park in long term parking lots and garages. The downside would be a negative impact on businesses.
2. ***Install multispace meters on residential blocks.*** This would have the same pros and cons as decreasing parking duration to one hour on residential blocks. However, another negative impact of this strategy would be the time it takes to recoup the cost of the meters and maintenance of the meters.
3. ***Resident only parking after 6 PM within acceptable walking distances of King Street on both sides of the street.*** This would encourage long-term parkers to park in longer-term parking facilities and allow for individual blocks to opt out. However, it would have a negative impact on businesses, and under-utilization may occur as parking will be restricted to resident on both sides of the street.
4. ***Resident only parking after 6 PM within acceptable walking distance of King Street on one side of the street.*** This would give visitors an option of available parking on one side of the street and encourages long-term parkers to park in appropriate longer-term facilities. It would also allow for individual blocks to opt out. The downside would be that residents of the block face without the "Resident Only" parking restriction may complain as purchasing a RPP doesn't guarantee a parking space.
5. ***Other solutions:***
  - a. Do not take any action until the overall parking occupancy reaches 85%
  - b. Improve enforcement
  - c. Old Town valet parking program
  - d. Remote parking

### **Staff Recommendations**

**District 1** - Don't implement any of the proposed strategies since the high occupancy rate is generated by residents not visitors.

**Districts 2 and 5** - Don't implement any of the proposed strategies until the peak afternoon occupancy (5 to 7 PM) reaches 85%. In long-term, install multispace meters on residential blocks within acceptable walking distance of King Street (permit holders may be exempt from paying)

***District 3*** - Don't implement any of the proposed strategies until the peak afternoon occupancy (5 to 7 PM) reaches 85%. In long-term, Install multispace meters on residential blocks within acceptable walking distance of King Street (permit holders may be exempt from paying)

***District 4*** - Install multispace meters on residential blocks (permit holders may be exempt from paying) or implement resident only parking after 6 PM within acceptable walking distance of King Street.

***All Districts*** - Ensure adequate enforcement and monitor parking utilization to determine when occupancy reaches 85%.

### **Work Group Discussion**

- If alleged parking problems are from 5-7 PM, that is not a major issue.
- The high car ownership rate is one of the issues
- There should be parking spaces for those with RPP and visitor parking permits at all times.
- All parking districts should be included in the discussion
- A Sunday evening would be a better gauge of the residential demand component
- Distance based pricing should be considered once multi space meters are installed in residential neighborhoods
- Persons with disabilities would have a difficult time with remote parking
- The spillover effect has to be evaluated to determine what the acceptable walking distance is
- The Waterfront Small Area Plan indicated that there would be enough garages parking to satisfy parking demand generated by new developments and visitors
- The Transportation Master Plan indicates that off street parking spaces is public property not private. As such permit holders shouldn't be exempt from paying meter parking
- Residential parking on one side of the street has a negative impact on businesses
- What is the desired percentage of spaces per block for residents versus visitors?
- Placing meters and parking restrictions will not pass political muster
- Staff should consider meeting with the church to resolve the issue in District 4 as placing punitive strategies that targets one property in particular is not a good strategy
- Variable pricing with multispace meters could resolve utilization issues in District 4
- Practical capacity is not a good indicator of a balanced system as it might be easily reached if the car ownership rate becomes higher

### **Public Comments**

- Staff should consider implementation of performance based parking
- Restricting parking to one hour could be a solution to alleviate parking issues near the church
- The issue of the multispace meters in the neighborhoods should be considered as a long-term strategy as it reduces the spillover effect
- The impact of an early trolley service on parking demand reduction should be assessed
- Staff should consider implementing a valet parking pilot program. Such program should begin using the City parking lot in the 1000 block of King Street and the lot in the 900 block of King Street. A U-shaped entrance and a kiosk could be built at the 900 block lot and test valet parking using the parking garage in the 1000 block

### **Next Meeting (Tuesday, August 14 at 5:30 PM)**

- The Work Group will discuss City-wide Employee Handicapped Permit Program.
- Adding meters in unmetered commercial areas.